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S H O C H I K U

"THE STORY OF THE FAITHFUL RETAINERS"
(Kana-Tehon-Chushingura)

----- Synopsis -----

THE FIRST ACT

THE THIRD ACT

THE THIRD ACT

THE FOURTH ACT

THE SEVENTH ACT

THE NINETH ACT

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----- THE FIRST ACT -----

Synopsis:

By order of Takauji Ashikaga, his younger brother Naoyoshi was to investigate the helmet of Yoshisada Nitta who had fallen on the battle-field, so he let Enya's wife Lady Kaoyo who had once served in the Imperial Palace judge the very helmet out of a number of helmets.

Meanwhile, Moronao Kono who had made love to Kaoyo stealthily handed a love-letter to her, but he was jilted by her. Therefore, he felt mortified and got cross with Wakasanosuke Monoi who came his way.

----- THE THIRD ACT -----

In Front of the Gate of the House of Ashikaga.

Synopsis:

Having got angry at Moronao's rudeness, Wakasanosuke Momoi was resolved to kill Moronao in the castle.

On the other hand, Momoi's chief retainer Honzo came to know his master's reckless determination, so he gave a lot of presents to Moronao at the back gate of the House of Ashikaga and asked the latter to be kind to his master.

----- THE THIRD ACT -----

Scene of Bloodshed

Synopsis:

In the saloon of the castle, Moronao met Wakasanosuke whom he had initiated into the secrets of the ceremony and apologized to the latter for his rudeness out of respect to the presents which he had received from the latter.

As to his attitude toward Enya, having known Kaoyo's ode in reply meant that she would never misconduct herself with any other man, he got so much angry that he humiliated Enya. Therefore, Enya lost his temper and stabbed at Moronao.

----- THE FOURTH ACT -----

Synopsis:

Because of the violence at the castle, Enya was ordered to commit "harakiri" (disembowel himself.)

Enya's chief retainer Yuranosuke who had been in his native province rushed to the scene and made up his mind to retaliate on Moronao on behalf of his master. As a result, Enya's castle was surrendered to Ashikaga's retainers and Yuranosuke left there dejectedly.

----- THE SEVENTH ACT -----

Yuranosuke was making merry in the tea-house Ichiriki. Teraoka-Heiemon, O-Karu's elder brother, was in Yuranosuke's party. Okaru, informed of her husband Kampei's death by her brother, grieved very much. Yuranosuke, though usually feigning stupidity, confirmed his determination of revenge.

----- THE NINETH ACT -----

One day Tonase, Kakogawa Honzo's wife, came to visit Yuranosuke at his retreat in Yamashina. Her daughter Konami had been engaged to Rikiya, Yuranosuke's son, so that her mother brought her to marry off O-Ishi, Yuranosuke's wife, however, refused to take Konami from a sense of duty.

This is how it was: When Enya Hangan gave a cut at Kono-Moronao, Kakogawa Honzo checked and kept him from killing the old knave. Yuranosuke and his family thought it against duty to make a match with Kakogawas. O-Ishi said that she would have Konami as daughter-in-law if Tonase would give Honzo's head as the bridal present.

Just then, Honzo appeared and purposely abused Oboshi so that Rikiya stabbed him in the side. It was just what Honzo expected and hoped. At the end of his life, he asked Rikiya to take his daughter to wife and gave him the ground-plan of Kira's house.

The theme of the scene is Tonase's maternal love and Honzo's paternal love.